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REMARKS

In the Office Action the Examiner indicated that the finality of the last Office Action has been withdrawn. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for such action.

Also in the Office Action the Examiner has indicated that claims 14 and 34-52 are allowed and that claims 8-10 and 15 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants appreciate this indication of allowable subject matter.

In addition, the Examiner has objected to claim 15 for depending upon itself; rejected claims 1-3 and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,276,821 issued to Pastrick et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,079,858 issued to Hicks; and rejected claims 4 and 16-33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pastrick et al. in view of Hicks and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,290,188 issued to Bassett. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for the reasons set forth below.

By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claim 15 to correct its dependency. Applicants submit that no new issues have been raised by this amendment and no new matter has been presented. Claims 1-10 and 14-52 remain pending.

With respect to the rejection of claims 1-3 and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pastrick et al. and Hicks, Applicants submit that the combined teachings of Pastrick et al. and Hicks fail to teach or suggest each and every feature of independent claim 1 and thus also of claims 2, 3, and 5-7, which depend from claim 1.

In the Office Action, the Examiner correctly admits that Pastrick et al. does not specifically disclose a door illuminator light source disposed behind the mirror so as to project light through the mirror. However, the Examiner inaccurately characterizes Hicks as disclosing, in Fig. 2, a door illuminator light source (42) disposed behind the mirror so as to project light through the mirror. The Examiner refers to column 2, lines 17-26 and Fig. 2 of Hicks. However, column 2, lines 17-26 states:

Control 32 communicates with a power supply, preferably mounted on the vehicle, such that the lights 42 are actuated through the control 41 when the flashlight 24 is mounted within the mirror. The lights 42 may be actuated whenever the vehicle doors are opened, whenever the remote entry system is

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actuated to unlock the vehicle doors, etc. The light then provides illumination adjacent to the vehicle doors. Some control for specifically actuating the lights at other times may also be provided. Further, the control provides recharging power to a battery 43 associated with control 41.

The drawing in Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the mirror shown in Fig. 1. Figs. 1 and 2 clearly show that the light is projected downward from the rearview mirror assembly through a lens 30, rather than through the mirror within the mirror assembly. The above-quoted portion of Hicks does not disclose that the light is projected through the surface of the mirror, but rather that it is projected through a lens of a light module that is removable so that it may be used as a flashlight. Thus, it is clear that the combined teachings of Pastrick et al. and Hicks fail to teach or suggest each and every feature recited in independent claim 1 and thus independent claim 1 is not obvious in view of these references. Likewise, claims 2, 3, and 5-7 are allowable over the combination of Pastrick et al. and Hicks.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 4 and 60 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patrick et al. in view of Hicks and Bassett.

With respect to claim 4, Bassett fails to teach or suggest a rearview mirror assembly for a vehicle, let alone one having a mirror and door illuminator light source configured to project light towards a door handle and/or locking mechanism of the vehicle, wherein the door illuminator light source is disclosed behind the mirror so as to project light through the mirror. Accordingly, Bassett fails to teach or suggest the features of claim 1 that are not disclosed by Pastrick et al. and Hicks, and thus these three references fail to teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 4. Claim 4 is thus allowable over these references.

With respect to the rejection of claim 16, the Examiner correctly admits that Pastrick et al. does not disclose a blind spot indicator light source for indicating when an object is detected in a blind spot of the vehicle. The Examiner, however, contends that Bassett discloses a blind spot indicator light source (24) for indicating when an object is detected in a blind spot of the vehicle. The Examiner refers to column 4, lines 63-67 and column 5, lines 1-14 of Bassett. The Examiner then contends that it would have been obvious to combine the device of Pastrick

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et al. and Hicks with the blind spot indicator of Bassett for the purpose of allowing the driver to recognize another vehicle in the blind spot.

The Bassett reference, however, is directed to a collision avoidance system for track-guided vehicles. It should first be noted that the track-guided vehicles referred to in Bassett are the type used in manufacture and warehouse environments for transporting and manipulating articles of manufacture, which are generally operated in two modes--connected or semi-independent (see column 1, lines 16-56). It should be noted that these vehicles are unmanned. Because there is no driver, there is no rearview mirror provided, nor is there any need for a rearview mirror let alone an indicator on a rearview mirror or anywhere in the vehicle for indicating to a driver when there is an obstacle in the blind spot of the vehicle. Further, as apparent from column 3, lines 13-16, reference numeral 24 does not represent a light source, but rather represents a "secondary sensor." This sensor, along with primary selective sensors 22, are used to detect obstacles in front of the vehicle and around a curve.

As noted in the Office Action, both Pastrick et al. and Hicks pertain to particular constructions of exterior rearview mirror assemblies for automobiles, which are not track-guided vehicles and which have drivers. It is not clear at all why one skilled in the art would have looked to Bassett to modify the rearview mirror assemblies of Pastrick et al. and Hicks insofar as Bassett does not even disclose a rearview mirror, nor the need to provide a rearview mirror or to provide an indication to a driver that an obstacle is in a blind spot of a vehicle. Furthermore, the combined teachings of Pastrick et al., Hicks, and Bassett do not disclose a blind spot indicator, let alone a blind spot indicator included in the same light module as a door illuminator as recited in claim 16. Accordingly, independent claim 16, as well as claims 17-21, which depend therefrom, are allowable over the combined teachings of Pastrick et al., Hicks, and Bassett, whether considered separately or in combination.

Like independent claim 16, independent claims 22 and 32 both recite a blind spot indicator either in a rearview mirror assembly or in a light module for a vehicle rearview mirror assembly. As noted above with respect to claim 16, the combined teachings of Pastrick et al., Hicks, and Bassett fail to teach or suggest a blind spot indicator let alone a blind spot indicator for use in a rearview mirror assembly or in a light module for a rearview mirror

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assembly. Accordingly, the combined teachings of Pastrick et al., Hicks, and Bassett also fail to teach or suggest the features of independent claims 22 and 32. Claims 22 and 32 are thus patentable over the teachings of these three references. Claims 23-31 and 33 depend from claims 22 and 32 and thus are also allowable over the teachings of these references based upon their dependence.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention, as defined in the pending claims, is allowable over the prior art of record. The Examiner's reconsideration and timely allowance of the claims is requested. A Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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